

REMARKS

I. Rejections Under 35 USC § 112

Claim 52 is amended herewith to depend from claim 40, thereby overcoming the indefiniteness rejection.

II. Rejections Under 35 USC §§ 102 and 103

Claims 9 and 40, the two independent claims remaining in the case, are amended herewith to include the element of claim 49. Claim 49 was indicated in the Office action as being allowable if put into independent form. It is believed that both claim 9 and claim 40 are now in allowable form. The remaining claims depend from these claims and are allowable therewith.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that independent Claims 9 and 40 are now in condition for allowance over the art, whether considered alone or in combination, as the specific combination of structural features presently claimed is neither taught nor suggested thereby. Further, Claims 10 – 14, 41 – 48, and 50 – 53 are also deemed to be in condition for allowance, as featuring patentable limitations on respective allowable independent claims.

Although withdrawn from consideration, in view of the Restriction Requirement, it is respectfully requested that Claims 1 – 8 and 15 -39 be permitted to remain in the application for possible prosecution later as a continuation application. Applicants respectfully submit that the independent claims are allowable over the prior art of record,

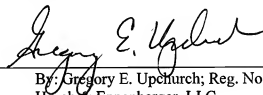
including the cited references. For similar reasons, and for the additional reasons set forth above, Applicants urge that the dependent claims are also allowable.

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

No new matter has been introduced by the above-requested amendments. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided below.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory E. Upchurch", is written over a horizontal line.

By: Gregory E. Upchurch; Reg. No. 28,482
Husch & Eppenger, LLC
190 Carondelet Plaza
St. Louis, MO 63105
314-480-1500
314-480-1505 FAX